ABE DASH, A WONDERFUL MAN

Abe Dash was a class act, a real gentleman. I never knew him to say a bad word about anyone, apart from unethical lawyers and dishonest politicians. He was always willing to help anyone in any way that he could, and his devotion to students was legendary. Students loved him; not only was he a great teacher, but his humor and war stories made classes much more realistic and fun. The staff adored him as well.

Abe really knew his stuff; I often had ethics questions in practice, and I invariably went to Abe for guidance. His insight was profound. Abe was widely recognized both in this state and nationally as a leading source on ethical issues, and judges came to rely on his judgment—heavily—when he testified as an expert.

Abe graduated from high school right into the maelstrom of World War II. He ended up in the Air Force, graduated from college, and then the Law School at Georgetown. In between those activities, he flew B-26 bombers in the Korean War where, flying prop-jets against Soviet jet MIGS, he was shot down, crash-landed, and suffered severe, long-term injuries. Nonetheless, Abe continued to fly in the Air Force Reserves, eventually retiring as a full Colonel in the Air Force JAG.

In the meantime, he had become an attorney. He ended up in Bobby Kennedy’s Justice Department and then with the Comptroller of the Currency, positions that led him to do things of which he was very proud—pursuing graft and fraud in high places. In 1969, Abe joined this faculty, where for many years he was a mainstay of the administrative law, legal ethics, and criminal procedure departments.

Abe Dash had many, many scholarly and professional accomplishments. His vision of ethics and just-plain good behavior should be copied by everyone. But what I, along with many of his friends, remember is how nice Abe was. He was a star, and I am proud to have been associated with him here at Maryland.

I’ll close with comments from the first three of my colleagues after we learned of his death; each said, “He was a class act.” What a fine obituary. Abe: Our Law School shall miss you. RIP.

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